

Thompson (J. W.)

TRI-STATES MEDICAL SOCIETY,

INDIANA, ILLINOIS AND KENTUCKY.

SECOND ANNUAL SESSION,

1876.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT,

✓
JOSEPH W. THOMPSON, M. D.,

OF PADUCAH, KY.

Delivered at Vincennes, Indiana, November 22, 1876.

PADUCAH, KY.:

MARTIN & Co., STEAM PRINTERS AND BINDERS.

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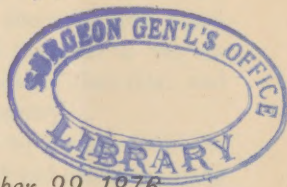
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GENTLEMEN:

We have met again, after the lapse of one year from the organization of this Society. To see you all once more is a great pleasure, and the earnestness in the work, which seems to move each individual member, strikes a responsive chord in my heart. Our humble thanks are due to the great Giver of all good, that since our last meeting we have not been called to mourn the loss of a single member by death. We should continue to leaven our labor with praise to Him who "healed the sick," and made merciful provision for the salvation of mankind.

This Society has its birth in an eventful period of our national history, the centennial of liberty and independence. Our people with commendable zeal, actuated by true patriotism, have celebrated this anniversary by a collected exhibition of their progressive development in the various branches of science and art on the memorable spot where a noble and determined body of men declared, by the pen of the immortal Jefferson, that they would be free.

Defying the world in honorable rivalry, we invited all the nations of the earth to compete with us in the comparison of achievements and resources; and from every land and clime they came; the Turk, the Persian and the almond-eyed Mongolian vied with the cultivated European for the award. Europe, Asia, Africa and the isles of the sea contested with us and with each other for the medal of America, and the result has been highly creditable to our own country.

The Medical Profession of the world, impelled by the same motives of patriotism and friendship, encouraged this grand and attractive exhibition and reunion of the American people around the "cradle of liberty," and caused to be held at the same time at Philadelphia the annual meeting of the American Medical Association and the International Medical Congress; thus paying a willing tribute to American enlightenment and progress, rekindling the memory of the founders of American medicine—Morgan, Shippen, Rush, Physic, Wistar, Kuhn and Bond—that noble band of pioneers, our professional ancestors forever enshrined in our grateful hearts.

The brief discussion of the past and present of medicine, and espe-

cially American medicine, will, it is hoped, be not entirely uninteresting on this occasion. As has been beautifully and poetically said of one year, we may well say of one hundred years: This is "a sort of post-house, where the fates change horses," and a review of the past with consideration of the present as a basis of hope for the future, cannot but be pleasant and instructive to all those who desire improvement, and are willing to labor for it.

Some men think our great improvement in the teaching and science, as well as our wonderful mechanical apparatus and appliances are useless in the interrogation of nature, because they believe the field of discovery exhausted by our illustrious predecessors; but deep thinking investigators all say that the science is yet in its infancy. Behind the veil which shuts out the future from our mortal vision is a vast storehouse of fact, to be brought forth by those who follow after us, and as inexhaustible as time. A celebrated steamboat captain on our western rivers, about the year 1830, made the round trip from Louisville to New Orleans and back in forty days, which was much shorter time than it had ever been accomplished in before; and on his return to Louisville there was a grand demonstration over this remarkable feat. Speeches were made, bonfires were blazing, and our captain predicted, amid tremendous applause, that the time would come when the same trip would be made in thirty days. Ordinary steamboats now make the trip in fifteen days, and the steamer Robert E. Lee can do it in ten days. That captain, (Anderson Miller) if he was alive, would be astonished to see his prophecy more than fulfilled. So it is with medicine. The knowledge is behind the veil, only waiting to be secured by intelligent, patient and well-directed effort. The huge, rough block of marble contains the statue, with all its curved lines and graceful posture, and the sculptor must labor with diligent chisel if he would carve it out.

In the consideration and comparison of medicine and medical men, ancient and modern, many salutary lessons may be learned. Seeing the immense disadvantages under which the early doctors labored, and contemplating their wonderful achievements in spite of ignorance, intolerance, superstition and the thousands of obstacles which have impeded and retarded the march of science since the world began, we are filled with admiration for their genius, patience and perseverance, and we involuntarily pay our debt of gratitude by honoring and revering their memory. Comparing the new with the old, gives us the proper appreciation of the inestimable privileges we enjoy—education

and civil and religious liberty—freedom to make any investigation and uphold any doctrine we please, without fear of the ignorance of the people or the pains of the Inquisition. And seeing what was accomplished by the men of old with such limited liberty and means, may give us courage, while thankful for our good fortune, to exert ourselves and press forward in emulation of their noble deeds, against all obstacles, trusting, as they did, to the verdict of time, given by future generations, hoping the same just praise may be accorded to us that we so heartily render to those who have gone before us.

I deem it proper on this occasion to mention only a few of the ancient Physicians, sufficient to show how they labored and suffered, and what they accomplished; and also to give some views on the present enlightened and useful position of the Profession. And if I can awake one thrill of gratitude to our noble professional progenitors, or nerve one heart to exertion in behalf of our beneficent calling, for the future, I shall feel abundantly repaid.

Medical practice of some kind has existed among all the various peoples of the earth as far back as we have any authentic history; and we have no doubt man has searched in nature for something to relieve pain since the creation. In the civilized parts of the world we find the educated physician, and among the savages we find the "medicine man," who remains to-day the same as when first seen by travelers and adventurers. Leaving the latter in his wilderness, both mental and physical, we have at this time only to consider the former, who is the professional descendant of the great founder of the science, "the divine old man," Hippocrates, the father of rational medicine.

Hippocrates was born about the year 460 B. C., on the island of Cos, in the *Ægean* sea; in whose city of the same name was situated the famous temple of *Æsculapius*, with its school of physicians. His ancestry, according to the heathen custom with men of renown, was traced in the misty regions of mythology to the "immortal gods," being descended on his paternal side from *Æsculapius*, and on the maternal from *Hercules*.

It was believed in ancient times that all diseases were caused by the anger of some offended god, especially in epidemics and plagues. This led the people to look to the priesthood for relief, and superstitious rites were used to appease such wrath. But reason had already asserted itself upon the subject, to some extent, in the schools of philosophy, and much had been found out through study, experiment, by accident and otherwise. Hippocrates gathered up all that had been learned before his time

and improved and enriched it with the labor of his life. He originated the first regular system of the treatment of disease; and opposing the superstitious idea, he advocated material views, and demonstrated the importance of cleanliness and light. He combatted the imposture of the priests and taught the pure doctrine of physical causes of disease, and applied physical remedies for its cure. "For the gods he substituted, with singular felicity, impersonal nature." He contended that supplication and penance were valueless in the curing of disease, being incompatible with the philosophic use of hygienic measures. He changed completely, though not without a struggle, the whole system of medicine; and as the revolution was effected amid the ignorant and fanatical prejudice of the people, stimulated by the unscrupulous priesthood, great courage, power, and influence must have been required to make it successful. It was successful, however, and should inspire us with courage to attack error and defend truth on any question arising in the Profession.

It is not within the scope of my purpose at present, to discuss in detail the peculiar theories and treatment of disease by Hippocrates, which you are aware would fill whole books. All agree that his crude knowledge was certainly the "seed in good ground," from which sprung the glorious, universal medical tree which covers us all with its protecting foliage. Many principles laid down by him are still accepted, and his labors form the basis of our science. His fame will live forever, and all the world, especially medical men, should venerate his name, certainly almost as fully, if not as irreligiously, as his follower Galen, who said that "we ought to reverence the words of Hippocrates as the voice of God." He died in Thessaly, according to different accounts, of great age, varying from 85 to 109 years.

Perhaps the most distinguished of the ancient philosophers whose attention was given to medicine was Aristotle. His investigation of nature was so able, and his reasoning and philosophy so sound, that twenty centuries later Cuvier and Bichat, the leading writers of the world on that subject, adopted his classification of comparative anatomy. Aristotle was deeply imbued with the views of Hippocrates, and the firm foundation of his teaching was furnished by the supreme, commanding genius of the "Sage of Cos."

Aristotle, the founder of the school of Peripatetics, was born at Stagira, a Greek colony of Macedonia, about the year 384 B. C., and died at Chalcis, at the age of 62 years. He was naturally a physician; his father having been medical adviser to King Philip of Macedonia, and

he himself practised medicine for some years. But his studies and researches in anatomy and physiology, and his philosophical doctrines in mode of teaching, formed the basis and were adopted and used almost exclusively for many centuries. Losing his father early, he plunged into dissipation and wasted his patrimony in prodigality of all kinds, and became a soldier, and was afterwards forced by poverty to resume his early studies, medicine and philosophy. He attended the school of Plato, and became completely absorbed in study and contemplation. He supported himself at this time by keeping a small shop, where he sold medicinal herbs, and prescribed their use according to the custom of the day. From such a beginning arose one of the mightiest minds that ever enlightened the world in any science. The drug clerk in his little shop dispensing the rude medicinal preparations of his day was the same Aristotle, the preceptor and friend of Alexander the Great, who afterward, by study and experiment, reasoned out the true doctrine of comparative anatomy, which has stood all the tests of time, which has been approved and adopted by the ablest leading writers, and which forms the basis of our teaching and practice at this day. It was his influence that gave a beneficent drift to the mighty physical force of the "conqueror of the world," and secured the founding of the city of Alexandria, with its famous library and school, under the Ptolemies, where knowledge of all kinds from every source was collected, preserved, distributed and handed down to succeeding generations, even to us as we meet together here, a professional brotherhood, bound by ties of mutual respect and assistance, and standing erect on the ever enduring foundation of the science laid by the transcendent genius, courage and devotion of Hippocrates and Aristotle.

Nearly five centuries after Aristotle came Claudius Galen, whose authority in medical matters for 1,000 years after his death was almost supreme. He was born at Pergamus about A. D. 130, and died there A. D. 200. He commenced the study of medicine at the age of 17 years, and afterward spent some time in Rome where his reputation as a philosopher and an anatomist became preeminent, and he was employed as physician to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius. His lectures, practice and writings placed him at the head of the Profession, a high position which he held for more than ten centuries without a rival. His commentaries on the works of Hippocrates inseparably connect these two great masters in medicine. Together with Aristotle, they are the great luminaries that light the lonely way through thousands of years of pain and suffering of the human race, furnishing the only rays of hope

during all that dark period. Though a heathen, his physiological investigations, confined to the lower animals, convinced Galen of the existence of the true God. With all the enthusiasm of a religious man, he denominated his writings "a true and real hymn to that awful Being who made us all." He tells us, that in his opinion, "true religion consists not so much in costly sacrifices and fragrant perfumes, offered upon His altars, as in a thorough conviction impressed upon our mind, and an endeavor to produce a similar impression on the minds of others, of His unerring wisdom, His resistless power, and His diffusive goodness." There is no doubt that the analysis of nature, unaided by the "written word," carried conviction to the philosophic mind of this great man, whose authority for a hundred decades gave direction to science in the medical schools.

Besides consuming too much time, it is altogether unnecessary for the present purpose to give a more extended view of ancient medicine, and we pass over the various noted men and schools who flourished after Galen, and come at once to some distinguished names of more modern times, and nearer to us geographically as well as in chronology.

Previous to the fall of Constantinople the Greek medical writers had been read only in faulty Arabic translations; but after that event learned Greeks carried their language and literature to the Western World, and medical men, availing themselves of this knowledge now read the works of Hippocrates, Galen and others in the original. Thomas Linacre, physician to Henry VIII of England, was very zealous in this and established professorships at Oxford and Cambridge for illustrating the works of Hippocrates and Galen, and laid the foundation of the Royal College of Physicians at London. Medicine and Surgery, constantly progressing, have since that time generally received the countenance and support of the British court and people, and also of most of the other nations of Western Europe.

During the middle ages surgical operations were avoided by the priests, who also acted as physicians, because it was held to be a violation of the law of God to shed blood; and that branch of the Profession was entrusted to what were termed barber-surgeons, men who cut flesh as well as hair. At this time there lived a man who began his career as a barber-surgeon, but his genius and power of thought and observation enabled him to work a revolution in an important branch of surgery. In 1536, Ambrose Pare, while serving as surgeon with the French army, in Provence, on one occasion discovered that his supply of oil, which was used boiling hot for cauterizing wounds, was

exhausted; this circumstance caused him great anxiety, but he was soon relieved at finding the wounds which were not cauterized to be in better condition than those that were. By this fortunate circumstance, the result of neglect or inability to procure the oil, he had accidentally made a great discovery in the treatment of wounds, and he at once abandoned the use of oil. He also substituted the ligature instead of the cautery in controlling hæmorrhage after amputation, and the principle then discovered by him is now used every day.

All great discoveries are the result of combined thought and labor, sometimes aided by fortuitous circumstances like the foregoing, but always accompanied with courage.

Cæsalpinus conceived some idea of the circulation of the blood. Servetus taught that there was a lesser circulation in some of the internal organs of life, but it remained for William Harvey, an English physician born in 1578, after having taught the circulation of the blood in his lectures for ten years, to publish his great work on the subject in 1628. Like all discoverers so much in advance of his contemporaries, his book was severely criticised, but the professional mind of his time became satisfied it was demonstrable; and what is rather unusual, he lived to see his doctrines fully established and accepted. He was a great man, and truly devoted to the science of medicine. At his death he endowed the College of Physicians with his paternal estate, one of the conditions of the grant being, that an annual oration should be delivered—"an exhortation to the members to study and search out the secrets of nature by way of experiment, and for the honor of the Profession, to continue mutually in love." This is good advice for us now, and may we not indulge the hope that in following Harvey's first injunction, we forget not the last?

In the eighteenth century lived those distinguished contemporaries, John Hunter and Edward Jenner. At the age of 21 years Jenner was the pupil of Hunter, and a lasting friendship existed between them. No greater blessing was ever bestowed on the human family by the mind of man than the discovery of vaccination. Before its introduction by Jenner it is estimated that the small-pox destroyed in Europe alone 400,000 people annually, besides leaving great numbers blind and disfigured. What estimate can be made of the good that has been done all over the world by the discovery of this great preventive to the loathsome scourge? Besides saving useful and valuable lives, and preventing sorrow, suffering and woe to our race, Beauty is indebted to it, for its protective qualities have saved her queens from a loss which

no human aid could, nor Divine aid ever did repair. It protects equally the hovel and the palace, falling like the gifts of Providence on rich and poor alike. How feeble are our weak attempts to give full meed of praise to the noble philosopher, who, in spite of many obstacles, at last succeeded in establishing it for the benefit of his fellow-man.

Both William and John Hunter were men of genius. John was the younger by ten years, and was by far the most original man. He did more to advance the cause of medicine, by his scientific investigation and doctrine of pathology, than any other one man. The basis upon which he relied to establish his views was the same source from which his ideas were drawn, the complete analysis of nature. In search of truth he subjected all doubt to the most critical test, being therefore very successful in discarding error. Buckle says of him: "For comprehensive and original genius he comes next after Adam Smith and must be placed far above any other philosopher whom Scotland has produced." No man ever made greater exertion for the development of nature than this most indefatigable thinker and worker. His investigations covered the whole range of the animal kingdom. "He dissected above five hundred different species of animals, exclusive of different individuals, and also exclusive of the dissection of a large number of plants, and the result was the celebrated museum which bears his name, and which at his death contained over ten thousand specimens, showing the various phenomena of nature.." This museum, the most noble contribution ever received by science from one person, was all the resource left to his wife and children for support, and was purchased by the British nation in 1789, and placed in the keeping of the College of Surgeons, where it now remains, emblem of the gratitude of the people to their great benefactor. Not so fortunate as Harvey, he did not live to see the full fruition of his labors, but they have been appreciated and accepted by succeeding generations. To him is justly given the credit for nearly all the improvements in surgery which appeared within about forty years after his death. "He is the father of pathology if we consider what pathology was when he found it and what it was when he left it." His genius, his energy and his lofty mind have raised an imperishable monument to his memory; and in extending and enriching the science of medicine and surgery, he most worthily demands our gratitude and admiration as one of the greatest benefactors of his race.

The contemporaneous history of the great men I have named shows that scientific investigation and discovery were hampered and obstructed

by all the obstacles which could be thrown in the way by bigotry, superstition and ignorance. In the earlier days there was less restraint, the philosopher being held in awe principally by his own superstitious fears; the arm of governmental power, instead of crushing, left the investigator to wrestle with his own dread of the anger of the gods or the rage of the ignorant people. But it was in the middle ages, when religious fanaticism enveloped the world in its dark and bloody robe, that a night of gloom set in on science which was to be contemplated only with horror by future generations. If a student worked early and late, endeavoring to wrest from unwilling nature some knowledge of her laws, he risked his life, being liable at any time to be accused of dealing with the devil and subjected to the pains of the Inquisition. The Bible was considered the rule to govern all human action, whether moral, medical or scientific, and the severest penalties were inflicted on those whose writings, in the judgment of the inquisitors, did not come up to the standard. Dissection, that most important of all things in the study of medicine, was forbidden. The ancient warlike people, though ever so fond of battle, carnage and the shedding of blood, looked with horror on such a thing as the investigation of human dead bodies for the purpose of learning the laws which sustain life. The scientific medical philosopher did not escape the general proscription which prevailed in the days when the writings of Copernicus were burned by the hangman; those famous books which contained the origin of the principles by which we read the stars, the plan by which the ancient mariner sailed across the sea and in our day Professor Tice makes his prognostications of the weather. The age when Bruno was burned at Rome for teaching the plurality of worlds, and Galileo was forced to recant his philosophic conviction that the earth turned round. Aristotle, on account of his scientific investigations, was accused of impiety, banished from Athens and died in exile. Constantinus Africanus, the most celebrated member of the Medical School of Salerno, was driven from his native country as a sorcerer. Albertus Magnus, the most learned man of the middle ages, a follower of Aristotle, was regarded as a magician and accused of illicit intercourse with Satan. Many idle stories of his "miracles" were told by the ignorant people. Arnold de Villa Nova, Physician to the King of Arragon, great in medicine and alchemy, under accusation of defective orthodoxy, lost his position at court and was excommunicated. Having fled from Spain to Paris, he was pursued by ecclesiastical influence with the charge of having sold himself to the devil. Retiring to Montpellier,

he became a member of the Faculty of Medicine. He was finally shipwrecked and drowned while on a journey to Rome, for the purpose of operating on Pope Clement V. himself, for stone, who, notwithstanding his sentence of excommunication, had earnestly besought a visit from the renowned Doctor, in hope of relief. Roger Bacon, the English Ecclesiastic, "the Admirable Doctor," the great student and writer on philosophy, mathematics, physics and astronomy, was accused of practising magic and astrology, and selling himself to the devil, and at the age of sixty four years the feeble old man was cast into prison, where he remained ten years. Upon his death-bed at the age of seventy eight years, he repented having taken so much trouble for science, saying, "it is on account of the ignorance of those with whom I have had to deal that I have not been able to accomplish more."

The banishment of the learned Jewish physicians of the "Dark Ages," the most scientific men of their day, through the animosity of French ecclesiastics in the fourteenth century, is described as "a most revolting spectacle to see so many learned men, who had adorned and benefitted France, proscribed wanderers without a country or asylum." Awful are the details of the expulsion of the Jews from Montpellier, among whom were the leading Professors and Doctors of the Faculty. Such was the fate of intelligent men who endeavored to turn the tide of ignorance, bigotry and superstition in that distant age. The darkest night rested on science of all kinds, "which only vanished when the Æsculapian cock announced that the intellectual dawn of Europe was on the point of breaking."

In later times, when men became more civilized, and the light of reason had begun to shine from accumulated knowledge, ignorance and prejudice, though with less success, still confronted science in its onward march and upward progress. John Hunter could never command the attendance of more than twenty persons at one time at his lectures, and was denounced by his contemporaries as an innovator and enthusiast. Edward Jenner only succeeded in establishing vaccination after a bitter and determined contest, under most discouraging circumstances, which lasted for years. William Harvey himself predicted, and afterward recorded the fulfilment of his prophecy, that the publication of his work on the circulation of the blood would diminish his practice.

The careful study of the history of medicine would be of great benefit to every medical man. It is a story of great antiquity and noble courage and achievement. For many centuries regularly

organized medical societies for the discovery of truth were neither heard of nor thought of. The various schools filled their place to some extent, but each school taught its peculiar doctrine, and condemned all others as falsities. Bigotry and fanaticism reigned in them, as in other sects of that age of the world. Often when a great mind, no longer able to be held in leash by the dogma of some particular school, slipped the cords which bound him, and taking a new departure, announced to the world some great discovery, he was immediately denounced and persecuted, and especially by those who had grown old in the practice of some peculiar mode. The indomitable perseverance, the suffering and courage of the physicians of old, justly command our admiration and respect. Laboring among superstitious, ignorant people, cumbered with ignorance themselves, groping in the dark, as it were, with none to lead them, dependent on rude and imperfect appliances for experiment, they struggled on, some falling by the way side, others persecuted and prevented by every obstacle, even death itself, and yet through thousands of years they were true to the trust of Hippocrates, and succeeded in handing down to us those great fundamental truths which form the foundation of our noble science.

We, the members of the modern Medical Profession of to-day, own, possess and enjoy this priceless heritage. This broad, firm foundation, this noble legacy, has been accepted, and upon it the temple of medicine has been erected, whose lofty spires and shining minarets reach heavenward. Now magnificent medical colleges and schools cover the whole civilized world, where are taught by able faculties the true doctrines of disease and cure upon the highest and best scientific and practical principles. The enlightened rulers of the world, instead of frowning upon them, furnish every facility in their power to add to their perfection. How different from the past! What a wonderful improvement is here! When we consider what we accomplish now, we can but be astonished that the early doctors ever did anything. Free and untrammelled we pursue our course. Formerly the greatest mind and stoutest heart quaked with fear at the thought of attacking some popular superstition or ruling dogma, and only once in a great while a man appeared with courage sufficient for the undertaking. What a change! In these enlightened days we search for truth every where. No professional dogma nor religious superstition can screen with its mystery or antiquity the error which lies at its base. The ancientness of an idea does not secure it followers now. The human mind has been so opened and educated in the light of reason, that I am

sure there is not a person within the sound of my voice who would not be willing to renounce the whole system of medicine, with all its glorious history, with all its endearing ties, if it was demonstrated to him, beyond doubt, to be a delusion. Truth is king, and in its path lie the dead bodies of the errors and fallacious dogmas of all ages. All are subject to it. There can be no exception. Every thing in life, every thing in death, must go down before the might, majesty and dominion of this our risen Lord. Our forefathers for a time, were compelled to grovel in the dust before the usurper, Error; but we in this blessed nineteenth century, have in all its glorious plenitude, the spirit of the words:

"Truth crushed to earth shall rise again,
The eternal years of God are hers."

When we experience a joy that glads our heart and gratifies our desires it is natural to look for the cause of our pleasure and render just gratitude to the author of it. When we look back on what medicine was, and then on what it is, we see a great revolution and naturally ask ourselves, why is this? What wizard wand hath wrought this change? And following the inquiry with investigation, we find that it is the human mind opened, enlightened and refined with knowledge. "The schoolmaster is abroad." We worship in a grand new temple now, and its God is Truth. Its influences extend to the uttermost parts of the earth. The medical papers and periodicals are its missionaries, and the modern medical societies are its churches, scattered all over the world. Knowledge freed the world. With ignorance, vanished prejudice and intolerance, and now standing in the broad light of day, with their votaries around them, universal science and brotherly love spread their white wings of peace over the whole earth, to bless and protect it.

Not a great many years ago members of the Profession were in a great measure strangers to each other in different countries; and neighboring practitioners were almost constantly at war, especially in small towns and country places, where consultations were wrangles, sometimes disputes over dying patients. All this is gone now, and we are an organized band of brothers.

We have the medical clubs in the cities and towns, rendering ready help to each other by advice and assistance, the county medical society which meets once a month, the district medical society which meets quarterly, the State and Tri-States medical associations with their annual meeting, and the National Medical Association and the Inter-

national Medical Congress, which also assemble once a year, the former, at some point in the United States, and the latter at different places in the Old and New World. The present extended and improved system of railroads, steamships and telegraph, annihilating distance and time, furnish easy means of communication and association, and our members now have friends and acquaintances in all parts of the world.

These societies, clubs and associations have for their primary object the search after truth and its dissemination among the Profession and people, and also to promote and cultivate brotherly love and unity of action among us. In them every member has a voice. None are too proud and high to recognize and conform to their rules, for they represent the majesty of the science. None are too poor and low to be recognized and protected by them, for in the inquiry after truth the lowly have often found what the lofty were too elevated to discover.

These organizations are not only valuable but indispensable in the present condition of the people of the earth, and their preservation of knowledge is not more praiseworthy than the fostering care they extend to genius and ability struggling with poverty. If a rich man, a physician with national or world-wide reputation, makes a valuable discovery in his practice, or reasons out a sound theory with his well ordered and educated brain he gives all mankind the benefit of it by furnishing an essay on the subject before his medical society, county, State or National; it is heard by representative physicians, published in the proceedings, and the medical papers and periodicals scatter and distribute it broadcast over the earth. Many poor men, of little reputation and education, often possess powerful natural minds and when one of these brings to light some important fact or principle for alleviating pain and saving life, he is not compelled to struggle, as formerly, waiting, hoping and despairing of getting it before the Profession and people; but is heard in societies with equal respect, and the merit of his work is gladly accepted for the benefit of all. Before the day of medical cooperation men of genius and talent have been held back for years by the want of means and influence to make an experiment or reach the public ear. The societies have supplied this great want in the Profession, and they form the palladium of its strength and endurance. In their perfection they embody the idea of the millennium, where every member, forgetting himself, gives the benefit of his mind and might for the good of the whole. This community of interest reaches toward the conception of heaven, where each disembodied spirit in the shining throng endeavors to make every other spirit as happy as

himself, and the happiness of the homogeneous whole is Heaven.

What a great and glorious revolution has taken place! Instead of darkness, we have light. Instead of ignorance, we have knowledge. Instead of hatred and malice, we have brotherly love and kindness.

And now considering what wonders the ancient philosophers accomplished, under the adverse circumstances before mentioned, should not we with our civil liberty, and improvements in every branch of the Profession, scientific and mechanical, do a great deal more? It will not do to say the field is exhausted. The future of the early doctors was as completely hidden and as uncertain to them as ours is to us; and with energy and faithful, laborious use of our immense advantages, our knowledge, and freedom, our frequent interchange of views and opinions, reports of actual experience through medical societies, papers and magazines, there can be no doubt of success. From the standpoint of our commanding position we see every reason to hope that the status of the Profession will be as much higher a hundred or a thousand years hence as our present condition is above that of the same number of years in the past. Indeed, with our unparalleled and delightful opportunities, the ratio should be much greater.

The Medical Profession is as far if not farther advanced than any other of the sciences. Ignorance, superstition and intolerance have received a defeat from which they will never recover. We are stepping far and fast. We are pressing onward to the goal of the hope which begun the race in the days of Hippocrates. When reason shall assume universal dominion, and all things unable to bear the test shall perish before the resistless power of thought, and no more cumber the progressive march of science; when the human mind, laying aside every weight and disenthralled from every burden of error, shall duly and gratefully appreciate the goodness and wisdom of God and the "adaptation of all His works."

Properly considered and viewed aright, the guerdon of study and labor in our profession is worthy of the effort of the greatest mind. It may not possess the meteoric brilliancy which dazzles for a while in some of the sister sciences, but it has enduring qualities shared by none. Where are the laws which were in force in the early days of medicine? How long would a fortification of that age withstand the mighty cannon of the present day? Both the lawyer and the soldier have passed away with their work, but the teachings of Hippocrates, Aristotle, and Galen are, in the main, as good now as when first proclaimed. Compare the great contemporaries, Pericles and Hippo-

crates. The first was an able, eloquent, and patriotic statesman of Athens; the last was the "Father of Medicine." Pericles and his country and the political issues for which he battled have been dead and gone over two thousand years. Hippocrates and his work come home to each of us personally, when we feel the pains of disease, and we admit that he knew us better than we know ourselves. Take, if you please, two distinguished Kentuckians of our own century—Henry Clay and Ephraim McDowell. Henry Clay, the lawyer and statesman shot like a meteor across the political horizon. He raised his voice in the Senate, and the whole people hung upon his words. "He touched his harp and nations stood entranced." But who cares now for the Missouri Compromise, or the gradual emancipation of slaves; the issues which he rendered famous? Ephraim McDowell, sitting in his quiet study at Danville, Ky., was the "Father of Ovariectomy," which has given to the female sex more than thirty thousand years of actual life. I speak it with reverence as a Kentuckian who honors his memory, but Mr. Clay is being forgotten every day as the issues of his career are obscured by time and the present agitated political condition of the country. Ephraim McDowell's fame has almost just begun, and will continue to live and grow as long as there is gratitude in a woman's heart. The great reason of this is apparent from the fact that the exigencies of human affairs call for different laws and political positions in different ages of the world; and in military affairs the improvements in means of defence have kept pace with those of attack. Not so with medicine, where the improvement is all on one side. "Men die, but MAN is immortal." There is no change in the subject upon which medicine operates. The citadel of disease, the human frame, has only the same defences as of old, while its great antagonist, the Medical Profession, with improved arms and better tactics, the accumulation of thousands of years of thought, is storming it still.

It is a traditionary precept handed down from Hippocrates, that "we should suffer present censure for the sake of future good"; and although our system of medical societies has received the censure of those who ignorantly or wilfully misunderstand them, any intelligent man of candor will admit the comparative elevation of the Profession, and also that it is due, for the most part, to the cooperative action of the societies, which of itself is sufficient vindication; and we can bear the blame and trust to time and a grateful people. And before closing, I wish to call attention to a special good accomplished by the organization in our

own section in the treatment of diseases common in certain localities. Works on the practice of medicine, by London and New York authors, may be sound in general theory, but being based on experience with the prevailing diseases of those localities they cannot be relied on exclusively as guides to practice in our Western and Southern States, diseases with us having different leading characteristics and being influenced by dissimilar morbid causes. For instance, in some countries pneumonia, pleuritis, and inflammation of the serous membranes call for active blood letting; but the malarious complications, peculiar to our bilious locality, produce a tendency to depression and congestion, demanding a supporting course to elevate the vital powers and preclude the resort to the lancet in ordinary cases. In the city of New York the leading practitioners rarely use mercury, that remedy being required there in a much less degree than in the malarial regions of the West and South, where climatic influences producing torpid action of the secreting organs, mercury is much more frequently needed and used than in New York, where the poison exists only to a limited extent. We are, therefore, compelled to leave the standard works to some degree, and look elsewhere, and the papers read before the medical societies and contributions to medical journals by physicians residing in the malarial country furnish the most thorough experience and valuable information on the subject for use in our daily practice in this part of the United States. Without the societies, we should each be thrown upon our own resources, deprived of that interchange of opinion and experience, and denied that valuable cooperative unity of action so desirable and essential to general success in any branch of science.

This Tri-States Medical Society was organized in this city just one year ago by the members of the Profession in the States of Indiana, Illinois, and Kentucky, at which time the distinguished honor was conferred on me of first President of the organization, the appreciation and memory of which shall go with me while I live. Being chosen from among so many abler men, I only feel the more the force of the compliment and my own unworthiness. Being called to the position by my professional brethren, I have tried and shall continue to try to fill it to the best of my ability, confidently and affectionately trusting to the same kindness which elected me to develop into charity for all errors of the head where the heart is right.

This Society has for its object the promotion, collection, and promulgation of medical knowledge, the improvement of its members, and to assist in elevating the standard of the Profession; and also to cultivate

fraternal feeling, untrammelled by local prejudice, feuds of schools, or otherwise. We have had a good beginning, and we meet again under circumstances most propitious. The committees will report, and it is expected many able papers will be read for our edification and instruction. I sincerely hope that all may enjoy the meeting, and return to their homes improved and gratified, and determined to do all in their power for the welfare of our noble and beneficent calling. We are a band of brothers united in a common cause, the undying warfare upon disease, a mutual struggle for the comfort, health, and life of the human family; and I devoutly trust that each and every member feels the importance and interest of the occasion.

Gentlemen,—These are stirring times in our country; party feeling runs high and the people are excited; politics is the ruling topic of the hour; we all have our peculiar views, but they can not, they dare not encroach on the sacred domain of medicine. The National Medical Association meets, and its members come from all parts of the country, and laying aside all other issues, they join hearts and hands in honorable fraternal relation. We should follow the worthy example, that our endeavors may be auxiliary to the moral influence which proceeds from their assemblies, creating friendship and good will, and carrying sweet peace to all parts of our beloved and troubled land. So that when our work is done and life is ended, we can claim all the benefit of the precious promise: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

